MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN WASHINGTON, D. C., JANUARY 13, 1922.

The third meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1922 was held in its office at 1729 New York Avenue, northwest, Washington, D. C., on Friday, January 13, 1922.

The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman;
Mr. Greenleaf;
Mr. Frazer;
Mr. Bacon;
Mr. Ayres;
Mr. Mowbray;

also Lieut. Colonel C. O. Sherrill, Secretary and Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PRECEDING MEETINGS: The minutes of the meeting held on November 11 and 12, 1921, and of the Committee meeting held on December 13, 1921, were approved.

2. PEACE DOLLAR: A report was received from the Director of the Mint that Mr. Francisci had completed the final model and that 800,000 Peace Dollars were minted and distributed bearing the year 1921. The United States Mint reported that there has been great demand for them. It is proposed to mint 180,000,000 Peace Dollars during 1922, but before beginning on this work it is necessary to make certain mechanical adjustments in the dies. The Mint reported that it is desirable to lower the relief to permit stacking at the banks and give greater distinction to certain portions of the coin. These changes will be made by the Mint in cooperation with the designer of the coin. The Mint advised that the law does not prohibit the sculptor's initials on the coin.

3. GOLD STAR MEMORIAL: Mr. Charles H. Niehaus, sculptor, appeared before the Commission with revised designs (A, B, and C) for the memorial to be erected by the Gold Star Cemetery Association at Des Moines, Iowa. The Commission approved the central portion in accordance with design "B" and the winged panels in accordance with design "C". The Commission recommended Roman lettering and suggested if space is needed for the names to have them appear on the panels in sequence - one after the other - instead of grouping them symmetrically; also the panels could be heightened if necessary. The Commission did not favor placing benches in front of the panels. (Exhibit A).

4. JAPANESE STONE LANTERN: Under date of December 20, 1921, Colonel Sherrill, as Officer in Charge of Public Buildings and Grounds, addressed the following communication to the Commission:

> "I am forwarding to you a copy of a letter from the Japanese Embassy to our State Department which has been referred to this office with reference to a question of a stone lantern which the city of Tokyo desires to present to the city of Washington to commemorate the planting of the cherry trees in Potomac Park. The designs, explanatory note and samples of stone referred to in the letter from the Embassy, are forwarded herewith.
>
> Your recommendations are requested as to the appropriateness of the design and as to a suitable site for the erection of the lantern."

The Commission inspected the designs and were agreeable to the suggestion that a stone lantern mark the gift of the Japanese cherry trees. The Commission noted that the designs submitted contemplate a Japanese lantern about twenty-five feet in height. The Commission thought a desirable location for the stone lantern would be in the grove of Japanese cherry trees now being formed in East Potomac Park, but were of the opinion that a Japanese stone lantern at this location should not exceed a height of eight feet including the base. The Commission suggested that an

appropriate form would be either one of the antique lanternsused as a garden decoration in Japan or a copy of such a lantern not over eight feet in height including the base. A tablet marked to show the origin and occasion of the gift could be placed near the lantern; and the inscription could be designed so that the excellence of the English lettering would correspond to that of beautifully designed Japanese characters. Photographs of such lanterns as the Commission had in mind were selected and marked "A", "B" and "C". Colonel Sherrill stated that the State Department had asked him to take up the matter further with the Japanese Embassy.

5. WORLD WAR HEADSTONES: Under date of November 29, 1921, the Commission received the following letter from Colonel George H. Penrose, Chief of the Graves Registration Service, suggesting a further change in the World War headstones:

> "The following is a quotation from a letter received from Major General Rogers, Quartermaster General, United States Army, now in France, dated October 14, 1921:
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> > 'With reference to our headstones, would say that I am convinced, and so was General Pershing, that our headstone is too small. The only data that Colonel Rethers has in the office he obtained from a Navy representative over here, which indicated that the size of the stone adopted was to be approximately 18" above the ground with a width of 10-5/8" at the base and 10-1/4" at the top, and about 22" to go below the ground, making a total of 40". The British stone is 30" above ground and has a width of 15" at the base. This would make our stone appear approximately one-half the size of the British. I wish you would take this up with Mr. Moore and tell him that both General Pershing and myself are of the opinion that if the Secretary of War decides to continue the use of the stone that it should be made of a larger size. I.had a sample made which is approximately mid-way between our present authorized stone and the one of the British, and this gives the stone a heighth of 24" above ground and 13" at the base. Suggest that you have two or three paper samples made, so that they will stand up, and talk this matter

over with Mr. Moore, so as to be ready to take it up with General Pershing when he returns. General Pershing, is still very much in favor of a cross, and says that Mr. Moore did not send the sample cross to him as he had promised, so I think it will be necessary to inform Mr. Moore to have another talk with him in regard to it. I am personally in favor of the stone similar to the one we now have, but larger in size.'

2. Three samples have been made up in paper showing -

(a) The smallest one, which represents the present adopted headstone;
(b) The largest one, which represents that suggested by General Rogers;
(c) The middle sized one, which is a compromise between the two.

3. It will be noted that General Rogers suggests that you take this subject up with General Pershing. It is therefore requested that after your interview with General Pershing, you communicate your decision to this office, as the bids for headstones are now being held up awaiting a final decision on this subject."

Mr. Moore stated that General Pershing has been out of the city but that in the meantime he had called upon Colonel Penrose with regard to the matter and had found him in accord with the views of the Commission expressed heretofore, namely, that no change should be made in the size of the headstone which had been designed by Mr. Platt according to the specifications furnished at the time by the War Department. Colonel Penrose advised that 1,250 of the World War headstones have been set in place in Arlington, and while looking at the stones individually they might seem small, on looking at the headstones collectively they present a very agreeable appearance. The type of cross, as suggested by General Pershing, for a headstone was not considered advisable because of cost of production and because they would be apt to break easily. As to the large stone suggested

by General Pershing, which would be nearer the type of the British stone, the Commission called attention to the distinction between the British and the American type of Cemetery, namely, that the British Cemetery is usually small with stone enclosures and large headstones giving the appearance of a line of stones and emphasizing masonry, whereas the American Cemetery is to be typical of Arlington, showing primarily only the small headstone, green grass, and trees.

6. MARKERS, EUROPEAN BATTLEFIELDS: Colonel O. L. Spaulding, Major X. H. Price, and Captain George M. Chandler, representing the Battle Monuments Board of the War Department, appeared before the Commission for a conference regarding their plans to mark the American battlefields of Europe with markers which will exactly indicate where the Americans fought. Colonel Spaulding stated that as the Commission had been advised at the meeting on December 13, 1921, their project includes besides general markers in the fields special monuments and that advice was particularly desired at this time as to the procedure with reference to large monuments, two of which were to be at or near two of the proposed permanent American Cemeteries - the Meuse-Argonne and at Thiaucourt.

Mr. Moore stated that each plan prepared by the Commission for the permanent American Cemeteries in Europe called for at least one large monument and that any plans of the Battle Monuments Board with reference to large monuments should be considered in connection with the cemetery plans. Mr. Moore also stated that the Commission had been informed of the desire of several organizations who wish to erect monuments in the American Cemeteries of Europe; that Congress would provide an appropriation for such large monuments in the near future was not thought probable. Mr. Moore stated further that President Harding has endorsed the recommendation of the War Department (House Document 145) to expend $856,680. this year, and that, if Congress provides this appro-

priation, administration buildings may be erected in which records, tablets, and markers may be kept as desired by the Battle Monuments Board.

The Commission recommended that for the present the Battle Monuments Board ask only for an appropriation to provide markers showing the location of the troops and that the request be made very general.

7. TREE MARKERS: Colonel Sherrill submitted a design for a tree marker to be used by the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds to mark the important trees in Washington, many of which have historical interest. Colonel Sherrill stated that the marker used at present is unsatisfactory in that it is too small. Some of the markers are of tin and easily detachable.

The Commission thought the design submitted somewhat too large. Mr. Ayres made a sketch for a smaller tree marker, oblong in shape, with place for title and two fasteners. The sketch was endorsed by the Commission. The new tree marker would be larger than the present one used, and would have an official inscription which should cause people to hesitate to remove it, and it would be fastened high enough so that it could not be easily reached.

8. THE HOTEL "PRESIDENT": Colonel Sherrill brought to the attention of the Commission the following letter received under date of January 7, 1922, from Mr. H. A. Gillis, mechanical engineer, 210 Albee Building, Washington:

> "I am submitting herewith blueprint drawings which will indicate the general layout and design of the new hotel building which I propose to erect on the southeast corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street, S. E., in Block 692.
>
> For your information, I will state that the exterior of the building will be constructed of buff Indiana Limestone and rug texture face brick of a shade similar in color to the limestone, laid with white raked out joints.
>
> I trust that this information will enlighten you as to the type of structure which will be built, and would appreciate your favorable criticism on same."

The Commission inspected the designs and approved them. (Exhibit B).

Colonel Sherrill stated that the submission of these designs is a satisfactory outcome resulting from the issuance of the Executive Order of the President on July 28, 1921, and the work of the Zoning Commission to whom the plans were submitted for approval as to the height of the building.

9. ENLARGEMENT OF CAPITOL GROUNDS: Mr. Moore reported that the Washington Star of Sunday, January 8, 1922, contained an article with drawing of the proposed plan to enlarge the Capitol grounds and particularly Union Station Plaza and the area south of the Capitol down to the War College. It is proposed to develop the area south of the Capitol into a flower garden and to lay out a boulevard to connect East Potomac Park with Anacostia Park. Mr. Peirce Anderson and Mr. Thomas Hastings, former members of the Commission, are cooperating with Mr. Elliott Woods, architect of the Capitol, in the development of the designs.

10. SUPREME COURT BUILDING: Colonel Sherrill reported that the Zoning Commission has approved the recommendation of the Commission of Fine Arts with reference to erecting a building for the Supreme Court of the United States at Maryland Avenue and First Street, northeast, and that consequently disapproved the erection of the Methodist Headquarters building at that location.

11. GRANT MEMORIAL INSCRIPTION: Colonel Sherrill submitted a revised design of the word "Grant" as the inscription for the Grant Memorial which had been sent to him by Edward Pearce Casey, architect of the Memorial. The Commission approved the design.

12. AUTOMOBILE TOURISTS CAMP, EAST POTOMAC PARK: Colonel Sherrill submitted a design for an Automobile Tourists Camp to be located in the northwest corner of East Potomac Park. The advice of the Commission was desired as to the appropriateness of the design in connection with the plans for the future development of East Potomac Park.

The Commission gave the matter very careful consideration and concluded that it would be a serious encroachment on the park and on the plans for its development to permit an Automobile Tourists Camp to be located there. The Commission also thought the space would not be large enough, and that the Tourists Camp should be located rather at some unused area of 6 or 8 acres in or near the District of Columbia, where it could not do damage to a park or be objectionable to residents in a locality.

13. STATUE OF GENERAL JOSE SAN MARTIN: Dr. L. S. Rowe, Director General of the Pan American Union, appeared before the Commission and stated that last July he received a letter informing him that some of the leading people in Buenos Aires had started a popular subscription to which two of the leading clubs contributed ten thousand pesos as a starter to present to the United States an equestrian statue of General José San Martin, one of the two greatest South American liberators, the other one being General Bolivar of Venezuela; that in the meantime the Argentine Ambassador had called and inquired as to the procedure necessary to mark the gift. Dr. Rowe stated that he had not learned how large a fund is to be raised for the statue nor that he had received any designs other than a plan for a pedestal (which he brought to the attention of the Commission) but that he desired advice as to the location of the statue, a site near the Pan American Building being preferred.

The Commission recommended as a suitable location for the statue the triangle (No. 110) in the rear of the Pan American Building. In order that the Commission may more definitely determine the space the statue should occupy it was suggested that if possible Dr. Rowe secure a photograph of the statue.

14. AMERICAN CEMETERIES IN EUROPE: Major George Gibbs, Jr., returned from the American Battlefields in Europe a few days ago and reported that

during his stay of three months there the work of concentration of the American dead in France has been continued, and that in two places at Romagne and at Suresnes, some work in the development of the American Cemeteries has been done; but that the War Department has been awaiting action by Congress to permit them to expend the sum needed, as indicated in the pending Resolution before Congress for the Cemeteries. Major Gibbs stated there is no authority to expend money for grading, planting, trees and acquiring additional land until Congress provides the fund. As to the procedure in the acquirement of the land Major Gibbs stated that the French Government will send their engineer with the American representative to negotiate for the land and turn the money over to the French Government. The French Government will pay the owner for the land and accept the deed. The French Government will then grant to the United States a lease in perpetuity for the use of the land for cemetery purposes.

15. STATUE OF DANTE: The Commission inspected the Statue of Dante in place in Meridian Hill Park with a view to determining the proper size of the permanent pedestal. The Commission thought the temporary pedestal on which the statue now stands too high and recommended that to determine the proper height for the permanent pedestal this section of the lower garden in Meridian Hill Park be given special study and a design made showing the statue and pedestal with landscape setting, for consideration at a future meeting.

16. UNION SQUARE: Revised Park Commission Plan of 1901. Several studies based on the Park Commission Plan of 1901 in the area adjacent to the Grant Memorial were presented showing various walk and road plans in connection with the axial and architectural relations of the Capitol.

The Commission recommended that, due to the composition of the major and minor equestrian groups of the Grant Memorial, the small division of the

related grass panels and their respective axial architectural accents (as shown in the original Plan of 1901 of the Commission,) and the desirability of having the area immediately surrounding the Memorial arranged as formerly, for the review of troops, the area about the Memorial be restudied, using a grass border and walk, each of suitable width, immediately about the base, and flanked by a large paved plaza similar in treatment perhaps to that of the Place de la Concorde, Paris, or of St. Marks, Venice.

17. THE MALL, TYPICAL ROAD CROSS SECTIONS AND WALKS: Reconsideration was given to a plan (formerly approved September 3, 1920 by the Commission) showing two typical cross sections of the proposed 30 foot and 35 foot drives to be built longitudinally on the Mall and also a cross section of the 15 foot cement walk of permanent width. The revised changes included a total drop from the center-line of 0.15' to the extreme edge of the walk, without any temporary gutter. Further, it was recommended by the Commission that in the future grading plans to be made for the Mall, that this walk be raised sufficiently to avoid giving the ground the appearance of being "pillowed", and to assist in securing proper drainage. It was still further recommended that the edge of the walk be rounded with a 1/2" round corner. This plan was approved by the Commission.

18. REFLECTING BASIN PLAZA AND TREE RELOCATION DETAILS: Two plans were presented showing revision of the Reflecting Basin Plaza (located immediately west of the Reflecting Basin) and the proposed relocation of trees northwest and southwest of this area to conform to the new changes necessitated by the former lengthening of the Reflecting Basin. A plan showing a 10 foot grass strip west of the Reflecting Basin and the relocation of the steps and fountains at each end of the Plaza, in connection with the necessary relocation of the trees bordering the grass terrace (involving the location of two trees

on the upper terrace - one at each end - so as to form a suitable spacial relation to the existing and proposed trees) was approved by the Commission.

19. RIVERSIDE DRIVE - LINCOLN MEMORIAL: Colonel Sherrill presented the design for the Riverside Drive to connect the Rock Creek Parkway with the Speedway in East Potomac Park. The Commission inspected the design and stated that until the lay-out of this drive is determined, it would be inadvisable to continue with the planting, grading and road improvements in the rear of the Lincoln Memorial. Mr. Greenleaf called attention to the fact that at a meeting of the Commission a few months ago the Commission had decided to postpone definite action with regard to the Riverside Drive, and that the Drive should be considered in connection with plans for the proposed Arlington Memorial Bridge, the lay-out of the Drive being dependent upon the plans for the rear of the Lincoln Memorial and the approach to the bridge.

Colonel Sherrill reported that the Resolution contemplating an appropriation of $25,000 for plans for the Arlington Memorial Bridge was not adopted by Congress in the recent Deficiency Bill but that the President had again strongly recommended its adoption and there is indication that the appropriation will be provided for the fiscal year 1923.

The Commission regretted the delay in the matter and recommended that, until Congress adopts the pending Resolution with reference to plans for the Memorial Bridge, the planting, grading and road improvements in the rear of the Lincoln Memorial should be stopped at the intersection of the Great Circle and the Riverside Drive on the north, and at the intersection of B Street south and the Ericsson Memorial on the south.

20. GOLF COURSE, EAST POTOMAC PARK: Planting plans for the Golf Course in East Potomac Park, the one contemplating deciduous tree planting, and the other evergreen planting, were reconsidered by the Commission.

The plan for the deciduous tree planting was considered by the Commission at a meeting on May 7, 1920. The plan aimed to secure a mixed deciduous planting of hardy high-limbed trees, as elms, oaks, linden, and ash, of distinctive character and scale, adapted to the peculiar site which conditions imposed and so arranged as to secure a large mass of planting effect commensurate with the scale of the park and at the same time to secure vistas of the water from each side of the golf course. The planting of various species of willow trees was recommended for the area between the Speedway and the river and channel.

At a meeting held September 3, 1920, the plan was approved, with the suggestion that White Oak be used in preference to certain willow trees and with the understanding that no existing trees be removed until unfit for park use. The restriction of the planting to comparatively few kinds of trees, and the featuring of the use of the various oaks and elms was recommended.

The Golf Course was opened officially July 8, 1920, and at a meeting of the Commission on November 20, 1920, Major Ridley reported that it has been urged by players on the golf course that instead of deciduous trees, evergreens be adopted for the course, since fallen leaves interfere with and interrupt the playing of golf. The Commission stated that this would affect the landscape, but in the interests of good playing they would recommend a suitable type of evergreen, a plan for which was to be submitted. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Commission on January 7, 1921, a revised planting plan was submitted, suggesting a mixed evergreen and deciduous tree planting. With the addition of several trees to certain large mass planting compositions, and with the understanding that no existing deciduous trees were to be removed until unfit for park use, the plan was approved.

Mr. Greenleaf explained details in each of the plans, saying he very

reluctantly gave approval to the plan which proposes evergreen planting for the deciduous tree planting, but did so with the concurrence of the members of the Commission on the objection made that the fallen leaves would interfere with the playing. Mr. Greenleaf stated that it would be years before the evergreen would be of sufficient height to add beauty to the landscape, whereas in the meantime large fine elm trees and the like could be grown, and that he would be glad to have the Commission reconsider the matter and revert to the original plan.

Mr. Ayres stated that personally he would rather play golf on a course having deciduous trees and that there should not be great objection to them; that it is a good thing to have such trees in that it makes players drive the ball straighter. Mr. Ayres stated further that most any golf course has trees either on it or at the edge of it and is thus to a certain extent affected by fallen leaves; that the period during which the leaves are falling is not long, and that at such time, for the sake of keeping the trees, it ought to be possible to have some one clear the grounds of the leaves.

Mr. Ayres noted the lay-out of the golf course, calling attention to the nearness of the tee to the greens. It was explained that the course was designed for playing either way around the course.

The Commission decided to revert to the deciduous tree planting plan approved September 3, 1920, and recommended that in the development of the planting to have trees about the greens.

21. RESERVATION 151: A plan for a curved 8 foot walk across this reservation to reduce trespass was presented. The Commission recommended its revision, making it parallel with M Street, and also reducing the wedge-shaped terminus of the park at its apex at Eighteenth Street and Connecticut Avenue. Formal planting was recommended at corners.

22. JACKSON PORTRAIT : At the request of Senator Brandegee, Chairman of the Joint Committee on the Library, members of the Commission inspected the portrait of Andrew Jackson, by Sully, in the Library Committee room of the Senate, and recommended its purchase for the corridor of the Senate. Senator Shields, of Tennessee, was present and approved the recommendation.

The Commission had as their guest at luncheon Hon. Henry Allen Cooper, of Wisconsin. In the afternoon the Commission visited Meridian Hill Park with Mr. Cooper and saw the statue of Dante and the statue of Jeanne d'Arc in place.

C O P Y

January 16, 1922.

Dear Mr. Niehaus:

With reference to the revised designs of the Gold Star Memorial for Des Moines, Iowa, which you submitted to the Commission of Fine Arts at the meeting held in Washington on January 13, 1922, the Commission have requested me to report to you as follows:

The Commission approved the central portion in accordance with design "B" and the winged panels in accordance with design "C". The Commission recommended Roman lettering, and suggested that if space is needed for the names they could appear on the panels in sequence, one after the other, instead of grouping them symmetrically; also the panels could be heightened if necessary. The Commission did not favor placing benches in front of the panels.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. O. Sherrill

Lieut. Colonel, Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Mr. Charles H. Niehaus,

Grantwood, New Jersey.

EXHIBIT A.

C O P Y

January 14, 1922.

Dear Mr. Gillis:

In reply to your letter of January 7, with which you transmitted blue print drawings of a new hotel building, to be erected on the southeast corner of New Jersey Avenue and C Street, S. E., I have to inform you that these drawings were approved by the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting in Washington yesterday.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. O. Sherrill,

Lieut. Colonel, Corps of Engineers,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Mr. H. A. Gillis,

210 Albee Building,

Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT B.